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Author(s): Hrach Martirosyan

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BRILL

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Armenian *čandari* 'plane tree'*

Hrach Martirosyan
Leiden University

Abstract

The Armenian word *čandar-i* appears in two basic meanings: 'plane tree' and 'poplar, aspen'. It is attested in a Commentary on Genesis hesitantly attributed to Ełišē. The other two attestations of the word come from authors originating from eastern parts of Armenia: Kirakos Ganjakec'i (13th century) and Zak'aria Sarkawag K'anak'eṙc'i (17th century). Particularly important is the testimony from Chapter 21 of Ganjakec'i who mentions *čandari*, the local equivalent of *sawsi* 'plane tree'. The Iranian origin of *čandar-i* is obvious, though the etymological details are unclear. Łarabał *tənǰərí/é*, which refers to both 'plane tree' and 'poplar' and is found in a late mediaeval Armenian dictionary, *Baṙgirk' hayoc'*, derives from *čandari* through metathesis: *čandari* > **čəndərí* > *tənǰərí/é*. The combined evidence from Ganjakec'i, *Baṙgirk' hayoc'* and the Łarabał dialect testifies to the existence and unbroken development of the word in the territory of Łarabał and surroundings and shows that the metathesis (*čandari* > *tənǰərí/é*) took place at some stage between the 13th and 16-17th centuries.

Keywords

Iranian in Armenian, Armenian Dialects, Accent in Armenian Dialects, Metathesis

1. ATTESTATIONS

The Armenian word *čandari* is attested in a Commentary on Genesis attributed to Ełišē. This text is only known from excerpts in a compilation by Vardan Arewelc'i (13th century, a native of Ganjak). The passage reads:

> *Aṙnē eris gawazans šēr, zor šši asen ew parsk'-mut'anabi, ew sawsi, zor ǰandari* (var. *čandar*) *asen, ew ənkuzi, zor ebrayec'in kaṫni asē.*[1]

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[1] See "Meknut'iwn araracoc' groc' Ełišēi vardapeti", *Matenagirk' hayoc'* (vol. 1, 5th

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As we can see, *ǰandari/čandar* is identified with *sawsi* 'plane tree'. The corresponding passage from Genesis 30.37 reads: *Ew aṙ Yakob gawazan šēr* (vars. *šer, šert, šš̌ēr, er*) *dalar ew ənkuzi ew sawswoy* "And Jacob took to himself green rods of storax tree and walnut and plane tree"; *sawsi* stands for Gr. *πλάτανος* 'plane tree'.[2]

The other two attestations of the word also come from authors originating from eastern parts of Armenia: Kirakos Ganjakec'i discussed below; and Zak'aria Sarkawag K'anak'eṙc'i (17th century, Yerevan and Aštarak regions), twice, in the form *čantari*, as synonymous to *č'inari* 'plane tree' (*HAB* 3: 183-184). In Chapter 21 of the *History of the Armenians* by Kirakos Ganjakec'i we encounter this tree name in the description of a terrifying vision, which prophesied the destruction of the city of Ganjak (Melik'-Ōhanǰanyan 1961: 235-236). This city, full of Persians and to a lesser degree inhabited by Christians (*bazmambox lc'eal parskōk', ayl sakaw ew k'ristonēiwk'*, $235^{l.7}$), was extremely hostile to Christ and his worshippers (*yoyž t'šnami ēr sa K'ristosi ew erkrpaguac' nora*, $235^{l.8}$) and for this reason was to be destroyed. Then we read ($235^{l.13f}$):

> *k'anzi yankarc pataṙeal erkri, artak's eleal ǰur seaw; ew caṙ mi sōsi, zor* ***čandarin*** (vars. *čantarin, ǰandarin, čandar*) *koč'ēin, mec yoyž, hup aṙ k'aṫak'n, tesin zna, yankarcaki šrǰeal iwrovi; ew i tesil nora dṙdec'aw amenayn k'aṫak'n; ew darjeal tesin zna, kangneal, orpēs yaṙaǰn. Ays eṫeal erkic's ew eric's ew apa ankaw ew ayl oč' kangnec'aw. <...>. Ew yankarcaki hasin zōrk'n t'at'ar, ew patec'in zk'aṫak'n yamenayn koṫmanc'.*

French translation by Brosset (1870: 116-117) reads:[3]

> "Tout d'un coup la terre se fendit, il en sortit, tout près de la ville, une eau noire et un **djandar** ou platane gigantesque. On le vit tout-à-coup tournoyer sur lui-même, et la ville entière fut saisie de terreur à ce spectacle. On le vit se dresser une seconde fois, comme la première. Cela ayant eu lieu à deux et à trois reprises, l'arbre tomba, pour ne plus se relever. <...>. Soudain arrivèrent les troupes thathares, qui cernèrent Gantzac de tous les côtés".

Russian translation by Xanlaryan (1976: 154):

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cent.), Ant'ilias, Lebanon, 2003 (pp. 765-929), p. 852. Text has been prepared by L. Xač'ikyan in 1945 and edited by H. K'yoseyan. For this reference and the information I am indebted to Gohar Muradyan (see also Ališan 1895: 397^{Nn848}).

[2] For a discussion on the tree-names in this passage, see Martirosyan 2010: 518.

[3] Here the chapter number is 22.

"ибо внезапно разверзлась земля и хлынула черная вода, и стало видно, как большущий тополь,[4] называемый чандарином, [растущий] близ города, вдруг сам собою свалился. При виде этого весь город заколебался, и снова увидели [дерево] стоящим, как прежде. Это повторилось два-три раза, затем дерево снова упало и больше не поднялось. <...>. Внезапно [на город] напали татарские войска; они окружили город со всех сторон".

Thus, according to Brosset, the gigantic plane came out of the cleft in the earth together with the black water, whereas in the rendering of Xanlaryan, as well as in the Modern Armenian translation by Aŕak'elyan (1982: 170), this was a real tree growing close to the city. The latter interpretation is confirmed by the Chronicle of Ananun Sebastac'i (13th century) in which the same event is narrated with slight differences (Hakobyan 2, 1956: 139):

zi patarel erkir el ǰur sew; ew caŕ mi ēr sosi, zor ***čandari*** *asen, sastik mec, or ēr hup i k'ałak'n*; var.: *zi patarеal erkri yankarcaki el ǰur seaw; ew caŕ mi ēr sōsi, zor* ***ǰandari*** *asen, sastik mec, or ēr hup aŕ k'ałak'n.*

2. *čandar, čandari* OR *čandarin*?

As we can see from section 1, the word appears with the tree suffix *-i, čand/tar-i,* in most of the attestations—Commentary on Genesis, Ananun Sebastac'i and Zak'aria Sarkawag K'anak'eŕc'i.

As for the attestation in Kirakos Ganjakec'i, Ačaŕyan (*HAB* 3: 183b) cites the tree name as *čandar*. Similarly, Brosset has *djandar*. In the critical text, however, we find *čandarin*. In MiǰHayBaŕ 2, 1992: 82a, the tree name in the passage from Kirakos Ganjakec'i is cited as *čandarin*, as if the final *-n* belongs to the word. The same is also seen in the aforementioned Russian translation by Xanlaryan: "называемый чандарином". However, the final *-n* has no etymological value and should be identified with the article *-n*. Let us consider the following examples:

- In Movsēs Xorenac'i, 5th century (2.39: 1913=1991: 165[l.3]; trans. Thomson 2006: 179): *p'oxin ark'unik'n yArmawirn anuaneal blroy* "the court was transferred from the hill called Armavir". Other examples from Movsēs Xorenac'i: *zSimn asac'eal leaŕn* "the mountain called Sim" (1.23: 70[l.17]); *Simn koč'ec'eal lerinn* "the mountain called Sim" (2.74: 212[l.6f]).

[4] Russian *тополь* refers to 'poplar' rather than to 'plane'.

- In Anania Širakac'i, 7th century (Abrahamyan 1944: 228[l.20]): *ew ert'eal yezr getoyn, oru Axureann koč'en* "and I went to the shore of the river, which they call Axurean". In another passage, Anania Širakac'i (Abrahamyan 1944: 321[l.7]) mentions *yardagoł* 'Milky Way' in an enumeration of atmospheric visual phenomena: *Ew ē or yardagołn koč'en* "and there is [a phenomenon,] which they call Yardagoł".
- In Movsēs Kałankatuac'i, 7th century (Ařak'elyan 1983: 99, lines 2 and 4): *orum Astełn koč'en blur; Č'ɬaxn anuanec'eloy.*
- In Vanakan Vardapet, 13th century (Xač'ikyan 1941: 166a[l.30]): *zor Šidarn koč'en* "whom they call Šidar".

We can safely conclude that all the attestations of this tree name point to a basic form *čandar-i*, rather than *čandar* or *čandarin*. The final *-i* ought to be identified with the tree suffix *-i*.

3. Dialects

Ačařyan (*HAB* 3: 184a) records T'iflis *čandari* 'poplar', Muš *čandar* 'log', as well as *čandari* 'plane' (dialectal location unspecified) mentioned in "Hoviw" 1906: 430 (on Łarabał, see section 5).

4. Etymology

According to Ačařyan (*HAB* 3: 184a), the word *čandar(i)*, as directly testified by Kirakos Ganjakec'i, was used by the Persians of Ganjak. Ačařyan does not offer any comment as to the identification or the origin of the underlying Iranian form, only mentioning Georgian *č'andari* 'plane, poplar' and Abkhaz *a-č'ʲandar* 'poplar'.[5]

The underlying Middle Iranian tree name seems to comprise *dār* 'tree, wood'. The first component is reminiscent of Pahl. *čandal* [cndl] 'sandalwood' (see MacKenzie 1971: 21), cf. Arm. *čandan* 'id.', Indo-Aryan *candana-* 'id.', etc. (*HAB* 3: 183b), which are usually derived from Indo-Iranian **čand-* 'to shine' (Mayrhofer *EWAia* 1, 1992: 528-529; *ÈtimSlovIranYaz* 2, 2003: 218-219) but may in fact be of Dravidian origin (Greenfield/Mayrhofer 1967: 84-85). For a further discussion, see below.

One may undertake a tentative comparison of Arm. *čandar-i* with Pahl. *činār* [cyn'l], NPers. *činār* 'oriental plane tree' (see MacKenzie 1971:

[5] For clarification of the Abkhaz form I am indebted to V. Chirikba.

22), cf. also Turk. *čynar* 'чинара, платан' probably from Persian, Kurmanji Kurdish *či/īnār* f. 'id.' (Cabolov 2001: 241), Arm. dial. Polis *č'ənar*, Van *č'inar*, Łarabał *č'inäri* 'plane' (Ačaṙyan 1902: 274).

According to Eilers (1971: 607_{45}), *ča/inār* may reflect Iran. **ča/inā-βara-* 'favour-bringing, favorable'.[6] In view of Armenian *čandari*, however, it is better to posit **čana(h)-dāra-* (with **dāra-* 'tree'), which yielded Parth. **čan(a)dār-* (through early syncope) on the one hand, and Pahl. *čē/inār* [cyn'l] < **čēnyār* (*y*-epenthesis) < **čanyār* (syncope) < **čanayār* (intervocalic *-d-* > *-y-*) on the other.

In view of the semantic fluctuation between the poplar and the aspen, i.e. *Populus tremula* (see Normier 1981; Friedrich 1970: 49-53; Friedrich, apud Mallory/Adams 1997: 33; Gamkrelidze/Ivanov 1984, 2: 626-627 = 1995, 1: 538-539; cf. also Émin 1864: 44-4), we can assume that Arm. *čandari* and its Caucasian matches display two basic meanings: 'plane' and 'poplar, aspen'. For the semantic field, compare Arm. *kałamax(i)* 'white poplar, *Populus alba*; aspen, *Populus tremula*' vs. Hesychian *καλαμίνδαρ· πλάτανος ἡδονιεῖς* 'plane' (*HAB* 2: 492; Saradževa 1981; J̌ahukyan 1987: 310, 437, 612; Martirosyan 2010: 347-348); Arm. *op'i* 'aspen, poplar' vs. Łarabał dialect 'plane' (*HAB* 3: 619-620; Witczak 1991).[7]

The implication is that both the aspen and the plane are thought to be auspicious trees, in a manner associated with spirits. A reason for this could be the fact that the leaves of these trees tremble in the slightest wind; note Lith. *drebulė* 'quaking aspen' from *drebė́ti* 'to quiver, tremble' (Schrader 1917-29, 1: 272; Fraenkel 1, 1962: 102b); the English expression *to quake/tremble like an aspen leaf*; the famous wordplay (if not an etymological connection) on *saws-i* 'plane' and *sawsaw-iwn* 'murmur, rustle' from Movsēs Xorenac'i 1.20,[8] in which we learn that Anušawan *Saws-a-nuēr* ("devoted/offered to the plane trees"):

jōneal ēr əst paštamanc' i sōsisn Aramanekay or yArmawir; zoroc' zsałart'uc'n sōsawiwn, əst handart ew kam sastik šnč'eloy ōdoyn, ew t'ē usti šaržumn, sovorec'an i hmays yašxarhis Haykazanc', ew ays c'bazum žamanaks

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[6] For this reference and the following phonological discussion, I am indebted to Johnny Cheung.

[7] For a further discussion on 'poplar, aspen' and 'plane' and their association, see Art'inean 1906: 24-30; 1913: 34-40, 51-59.

[8] Movsēs Xorenac'i 1913=1991: 63-64; trans. and comment Thomson 2006: 104.

"had been dedicated to the cult at the plane trees of Aramaneak in Armavir. The murmuring of their foliage and the direction of their movement at the gentler or stronger blowing of the wind was used for divination in the land of the Armenians, and that for a long time".

In view of these data it is tempting to interpret Arm. *čandar-* as reflecting an Iranian compound **čand-dār-* literally 'quaking tree', with Iran. **čand-* 'to tremble, quake': Pahl. *čandīdan*, *čand-*, ManMPers. *cn-ystn* 'to tremble, quake' (MacKenzie 1971: 21), Parthian *cnd-* [čand-] 'to shake (?)' (Boyce 1977: 31), etc. (see Nyberg 1974: 53a; *ÈtimSlovIranYaz* 2, 2003: 219) However, if the relation between Arm. *čandar-i* and Pahl. *činār* is accepted, the reconstruction of Iranian **čand-dār-* becomes phonologically problematic.[9]

5. The Testimony of Kirakos Ganjakec'i and the Łarabał Dialect

As demonstrated by the passage from Kirakos Ganjakec'i, the huge plane tree (*sawsi*) close to the city of Ganjak was called *čandari*. It seems that this is an allusion to the vernacular of the area. Of course, both the shape and etymology clearly show that the word is of Persian origin, but this does not imply that it was in use only by the Persian inhabitants of Ganjak, as has been assumed by Ačaṙyan (*HAB* 3: 183b). According to the same passage, the city was inhabited also by Christians, i.e. Armenians (cf. Melik'-Ōhanǰanyan 1961: XIX). Ganjak (Elizavetpol, nowadays Kirovabad/Ganǰa) is located in Šakašēn (*HayTełBaṙ* 1, 1986: 785-786), a district in the province of Utik' that belonged to Armenia from ancient times.[10] One may, therefore, look for evidence from the dialects of Łarabał and surroundings, which are widely spoken in the areas of the provinces of Arc'ax and Utik'.

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[9] One should also reckon with the aforementioned association with Iranian **čand-* 'to shine', which is possibly reflected in Armenian *čačanč'* 'ray'. We might assume that the tree-name **čand-dār-* originally referred to 'white poplar' and etymologically means "white or shining tree"; compare Gr. *λεύκη* 'white poplar, Populus alba' from *λευκός* 'clear, white' (cf. also Art'inean 1913: 34-40). Note that one of the meanings of the tree-name *saws* is also 'white poplar' (*NHB* 2: 768c; cf. Greppin 1985: 71). In that case the word may be derived from *saws* 'bright-coloured'. However, this is uncertain.

[10] Note the attestations in Strabo, Ptolemy and *Ašxarhac'oyc'* (see Hübschmann 1904: 352-353, 457; Adontz 1970 (1908): 324-325, 495; Ačaṙyan 1940: 13, 37, 55; Mnac'akanyan 1969: 15-64; Eremyan 1963: 73a; Hewsen 1992: 143-144, 146, 194, 260-262, 262$_{172A}$; HayTełBaṙ 4, 1998: 49).

In the Armenian dialects that are spoken in eastern and southeastern peripheries of the Armenian-speaking territories, namely Agulis, Meɬri, and most Łarabał dialects, including Hadrut' and Goris, the word accent in polysyllables normally occupies the penultimate position (Muradyan 1982: 67-72; Vaux 1998: 132-136, 141-144; Weitenberg 2001). There are a number of exceptions to the penultimate accentuation pattern, one of them being the tree suffix *-i*, which is mostly accented in, e.g., Karčewan; cf. *xnjor-i* 'apple tree' > *xinjirí*; *kaɬni* 'tree' > *kaɬní*; *uŕ-eni* 'willow' > *həŕní*; *serkewl-i* 'quince tree' > *sikivilí*; *tanj-i* 'pear tree' > *tənjí* (Muradyan 1960: 167, 195b, 196b, 202b, 204b, 206a; Weitenberg 2001: 66). The same is observable in Kak'avaberd: *xənjirí*, *kaɬní*, *hɔŕí*, *sə/ikivilí*, *ta/ənjí* (Muradyan 1967: 16, 173a, 175a, 182a, 186a). There are few exceptions, e.g. *ciran-i* 'apricot tree' > Karčewan *ciráni*; Kak'avaberd has both *ciraní* and *ciráni* (Muradyan 1960: 196a; 1967: 16, 174a).

In Łarabał we mostly find tree names with a non-accented *i*-suffix, e.g. *t'eɬ-i* 'elm tree' > *t'éɬɛ* and *t'eɬawš-i* 'holm-oak, cedar, pine' > *t'ɛɬúši* or *t'əɬɔ́ši* 'a kind of mountainous tree' (Ačaŕyan 1913: 357b; *HAB* 2: 171-172; Davt'yan 1966: 356; Martirosyan 2010: 283-284); *ciran-i* 'apricot tree' > *cə/ɛráns* (Davt'yan 1966: 356, 383); *moš-i* 'bramble, blackberry-bush' > *móši*; *mor-i* 'bramble' > Łarabał *mórɛ* 'strawberry' (*HAB* 3: 346a, 347b; Davt'yan 1966: 431; Martirosyan 2010: 473, 475); *uŕ-i* 'willow' > *hɔ́ŕɛ/i* (Davt'yan 1966: 450; cf. *HAB* 3: 607). In addition, there are also forms with final accentuation: *t'zeni* 'fig tree' > *t'üzni*, *t'uzí* (cf. also Loŕi *t'əzən-k'-i*) (Davt'yan 1966: 357; Martirosyan 2010: 295); *t't'-eni* 'mulberry tree' > *t'ut'né* (Davt'yan 1966: 357); *čołopur-i* 'walnut tree' > *čəɬpərí*, *čəɬpəré*, *čuɬpəré* (ibid.: 1966: 353; cf. *HAB* 3: 211a). Note also Łaradał *t'lí* from *t'eɬ-i* 'elm tree' (*HAB* 2: 171b). One may assume that originally the accented feature of this *i*-suffix was peculiar to the whole Meɬri-Łarabał area; later the accentuation of tree names analogically became mostly penultimate in Łarabał whereas the accented *i*-suffix has been preserved in Meɬri practically intact.

Thus, the tree name *čandar-i* might have yielded **čəndərí* or **čəndəré* in Łarabał and surrounding areas. This hypothetical form astonishingly resembles Łarabał **tnčri* 'a huge mountainous tree', which is recorded by Ačaŕyan (1913: 1036-1037) with no semantic specification or an etymological suggestion. A theoretically possible by-form **čandar-eni*, with the

other productive plant suffix *-eni*, would also yield a syncopated form even if we had to start with a penultimate stress, thus **čəndər-éni*.

One finds plenty of evidence for this tree name in folklore and ethnographic literature from Łarabał pointing to the meaning 'plane', perhaps also 'poplar'. For instance, it occurs in a folk tale told by Mik'ayel Ałak'elyan in 1961, in Hilis, a village in the district of Step'anakert (*HŽHek'* 7, 1979: 343[1.6f]): *min pec'ür, tənǰəre caṙ* "a high *tənǰəre* tree". Here (736b) the word *tənǰəre* is glossed as *bardi* 'poplar'. Łaziyan (1983: 189b) records *tnǰr-eni* 'plane', which can be derived from the aforementioned **čandar-eni* > **čəndər-éni*.

In a list of Łarabał tree names (the meanings are not specified), L. Harut'yunyan (1991: 335) mentions *tnǰre* and *č'nari*. The latter is clearly the plane, whereas the former may refer to both 'plane' and 'poplar'. The word is also mentioned in another list of the same book (p. 14), in the form *tnǰri*. In a folk tale from this collection (p. 38, lines 2 and 14 from the bottom), two fast-growing brothers are compared with first *č'nari* and then with *tnǰəre*.

In the village of Sxtorašen (Arc'ax, district of Martuni) there is a huge plane tree, 54 m high, more than 2000 years old, with a 'triple-source' spring called *Tənǰəru ałbyur* (*ałbyur* meaning 'spring'), issuing from under the tree. Both the tree and the spring are venerated, as well as a huge rock not far from this place (Lalayan 2, 1988 (1897-1898): 161; Xač'atryan 1988: 118-119; *HayTełBaṙ* 4, 1998: 628c; 5, 2001: 89b).

We can conclude that the word *čandari* has evolved into Łarabał *tənǰəri* through metathesis of the dental stop and dental affricate. Another possible example for such a metathesis may be seen in Mełri *kəndíč'* 'beak, bill' from ClArm. *knčit'*.[11]

6. BAṘGIRK' HAYOC'

According to Ališan (1895: 584[Nr2848], 612[Nr2971]), the plane tree (*sawsi*) is called *tnčeri* or *tnze/əri* in a dictionary (*Baṙgirk'*) and in eastern dialects. Now we can specify both the dictionary and the precise dialectal area. Of mediaeval Armenian dictionaries, it is *Baṙgirk' hayoc'* of Eremia Mełrec'i

[11] See Ałayan 1954: 275b. One might wonder whether the metathesis has been prompted by a folk-etymological interpretation of the tree name, e.g. as **tun-ǰri* 'house of water' (cf. the aforementioned *Tənǰəru ałbyur* "spring of Tnǰri").

that is specifically called *baṙgirk'* (Amalyan 1971: 251_1). Indeed, we find here the following gloss (Amalyan 1975: 296^{Nr431}): *sōsi · tnǰri, or ē č'inari "sōsi* 'plane' = *tnǰri*, which is *č'inari* 'plane'".[12]

Baṙgirk' hayoc' is a late mediaeval dictionary compiled in the 16-17th centuries on the basis of an earlier glossary entitled *Baṙk' k'ert'ołakank'*, and published in 1698 in Livorno. Eremia Mełrec'i (from Mełri, extreme southeast of Armenia) is traditionally considered to be the editor or publisher of this dictionary (Amalyan 1971; idem 1975, introduction). H. Davt'yan (1976), however, criticises this view and argues that the dictionary was actually edited/published by Sargis Evdokiac'i.

It is not clear what a role has Eremia Mełrec'i played in compiling, copying or editing this dictionary. At any case, I think, there are many examples, which clearly display dialectal features peculiar (or are geographically confined) to eastern and north/southeastern dialects, particularly those of Łarabał, Mełri and adjacent areas. In many cases these forms are used in *Baṙgirk' hayoc'* to render literary lexical entries and should, therefore, be regarded as living vernacular forms.

7. Cultural excursus

It is traditionally believed that a huge snake dwells in the plane tree of Sxtorašen (Lalayean 1897: 212 = Lalayan 2, 1988: 170. On this tree, see section 5.). This probably shows that this remarkable tree, *tənǰəri* < *čandari*, with its homonymous underground spring has been in a way associated with the Cosmic Tree of the Cosmic Ocean. Note the Armenian folk belief about *Andndayin Ōj*, the Abyssal Serpent, sometimes represented as a black serpent (*sev ōj*) at the abyssal tree (*andndayin caṙ*).

It is also remarkable that in the terrifying vision, which prophesied the destruction of the city of Ganjak as described in the above passage from Kirakos Ganjakec'i, the triple overthrow of the tree was anticipated by the emergence of underground black water (*ǰur seaw*) from out of the earth. This is reminiscent of *Sew ǰur*, "Black water", of the Chaotic Ocean or the Abyss, which, according to Armenian folk beliefs, can emerge and destroy the world (see Nžděhean 1902: 263_2; Sasna cṙer 1, 1936: 282; Harut'yunyan 2000: 9-11, 186).

[12] *MǰHayBaṙ* 2, 1992: 393b has *tnǰri* 'plane' citing only this gloss from *Baṙgirk' hayoc'*.

SUMMARY

The Armenian word *čandar-i* appears in two basic meanings: 'plane tree' and 'poplar, aspen'. It is attested in a Commentary on Genesis hesitantly attributed to Ełišē. The other two attestations of the word come from authors originating from eastern parts of Armenia: Kirakos Ganjakec'i (13th century) and Zak'aria Sarkawag K'anak'eṙc'i (17th century).

Particularly important is the testimony from Chapter 21 of Kirakos Ganjakec'i who mentions *čandari* in his description of a terrifying vision that prophesied the destruction of the city of Ganjak. This city was located in Šakašēn, a district in the province of Utik' belonging to Armenia since the ancient times.

The Iranian origin of the Armenian tree name *čandar-i* is obvious, though the etymological details are not clear. The semantic interchange between the poplar/aspen and the plane is also observable in a number of other examples and is motivated by their association with spirits. It is, therefore, tempting to treat *čandar-i* as a loanword from an unattested Iranian tree name, **čand-dār-*, literally 'quaking tree'. Compare Lith. *drebulė̃* 'quaking aspen' from *drebė́ti* 'to quiver, tremble', and Arm. *saws-i* 'plane' vs. *sawsaw-iwn* 'murmur, rustle' (cf. Movsēs Xorenac'i 1.20). On the other hand, it may be derived from a Middle Iranian **čan(a)-dār*, possibly 'tree of favour', continued by Middle Persian and New Persian *činār* 'oriental plane tree'. The vocalic developments involved in this explanation are not entirely clear, so the former solution seems somewhat preferable. However, a disadvantage of this solution is that it seems to force us to reject the connection between this word and the Middle Persian synonymous *činār*. In either case, this Armenian word provides indispensable evidence for Iranian lexicology.

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